

The Healthy MOM Act, or the Healthy Maternity Obstetric Medicine Act

WHAT THIS BILL DOES

- Creates a special enrollment period for pregnant women to be able to enroll in, or make a change to, their health insurance coverage upon reporting the pregnancy to their health insurance issuer, the Federal Exchange, or their group health plan.
- The Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) shall issue regulations with respect to the special enrollment period, including how to report the pregnancy; how long the special enrollment period will last; and the effective date of coverage once a women signs up for a plan.
- The exact sections of the law that are amended by this bill: (1) the Public Health Service Act; (2) the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (or the ACA); (3) the Special Enrollment Periods section of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, which applies to group health plans; and (4) the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF BILL

- For health plans beginning in the 2017 plan year.
- For FEHB plans only: for plans beginning 12 months after the date of enactment.

WHO SUPPORTS THIS BILL

- Advocacy Organizations: American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), March of Dimes, National Patient Advocate Foundation, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and Young Invincible
- 77 Original Cosponsors (and counting): Adams, Bass, Beatty, Becerra, Blumenauer, Boyle, Brown, Butterfield, Capps, Cárdenas, Carson, Castor, Chu, Clark, Cleaver, Clyburn, Cohen, Connolly, Conyers, Crowley, Davis (IL-07), Delaney, DeLauro, DeSaulnier, Dingell, Edwards, Ellison, Farr, Fattah, Foster, Fudge, Garamendi, Grijalva, Gutiérrez, Hastings, Honda, Israel, Jackson Lee, Johnson (TX-30), Kaptur, Kelly, Kirkpatrick, Kuster, Langevin, Lawrence, Lee, Levin, Lewis, Lieu, Maloney (NY-12), Maloney (NY-18), McCollum, McDermott, Meeks, Moore, Moulton, Nadler, Napolitano, Norcross, Norton, O'Rourke, Pascrell, Payne, Jr., Richmond, Rush, Sánchez, Scott (GA-13), Sires, Speier, Thompson (MS-02), Tonko, Torres, Van Hollen, Vargas, Vela, Waters, Wilson.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

- In February 2013, CMS issued a rule where it stated it would not announce any new special enrollment periods, but noted that the Secretary of HHS could issue future subguidance to designate a special enrollment period for pregnant women.
- In March 2013, Rep. BWC and 54 other House Members wrote to Secretary Burwell urging her to create such a special enrollment period for pregnancy. 32 advocacy organizations and 37 Senate Democrats wrote in as well.
- In April 2013, HHS Secretary Burwell responded to the letter, stating that HHS does not actually have the legal authority to create a special enrollment period for pregnant women. Congress would need to pass law to address the issue.